



First News

June 2023

The Monthly Publication of First Lutheran Church, Portland, ME



Semiannual Meeting

Our June Congregational Meeting will take place on Sunday, June 25th following the worship service.

Highlights of the meeting will be the election of new Council members and a budget update.

Please plan on attending this important meeting.



Evensong Taize

I have been struck by the ways that God's grace continues to surprise me. Last month, I was away visiting family and so I was not able to attend our May service. And by all accounts it went really well and we had more new people join us for worship. I can't say how thrilled I am that not only our First Lutheran Community, but our sisters and brothers from other faith communities, and others who are new to worship, are finding peace, solace, and the presence of God at our Evensong Taize services.

While each service may not boast grand multitudes, we have had upwards of 40-50 different people attend since we started our service last October. But it's not about numbers; it's about relationships. And this is where I find myself really encouraged — because we are building a real community at the Taize service. A number of us from the Taize service and First Lutheran will be joining with our sister church Trinity Episcopal, and will march in the upcoming Pride Parade at the [Portland Pride Festival](#) on June 17th. We will be marching as a sign and symbol of Christ's love for ALL people; that we serve a God who is especially concerned with the poor, the lonely, the estranged, the marginalized, and the oppressed.

Thank you for all of your continued prayers and moral support. And, please join us at our upcoming Evensong Taize services: Sunday, June 4th at 6:30pm, Sunday, July 2nd at 6:30pm.

Aaron Hoffman

Financial Update

FLC had a net operating deficit in April 2023 of \$10,987. We had expected a deficit of \$665 so the result was significantly unfavorable to our budget. The primary cause was parsonage renovations and pledge shortfalls. Our operating account maintains a healthy balance, but will start to erode once Pastor Mark begins his ministry with us and we begin paying his salary.

A deficit budget of \$45,977 for 2023 was adopted, updates to reflect the start of Pastor Mark will be presented to the congregation at the semiannual meeting.

If you have questions, please contact me by e-mail or on my cell phone, 207-939-0820.

--Ed Daggett, Treasurer

ed.daggett@flcme.org

	Actual April 2023	Actual YTD
Operating Income	\$26,184	\$108,893
Operating Expenses	\$37,171	\$137,644
Net Operating Income (Loss)	(\$10,987)	(\$25,751)



From the Pastor

Dear First Lutheran friends,

My wife, Linda, and I THANK YOU very much for your warm welcome and gracious hospitality upon our arrival here in Portland on Saturday, May 13th! We so appreciated the gift basket we found when we first entered the parsonage kitchen, the delicious lasagna meal we enjoyed on our first evening in the house (and for three more nights!), all the hard work that went into preparing the parsonage, the prompt responsiveness from Steve and Ken to our household repair and supply needs, and the warm welcome expressed to us by so many. We are also grateful to God that our long trip from Arizona went smoothly and that our move-in is nearing completion. We are also delighted to be much nearer to our three daughters and their families who all live within a few hours of each other. It is indeed a blessing and a privilege to have started serving and fellowshiping with you during these last few weeks.

As a “Transition Consultant” under Call from the New England Synod, I am here to accompany, support and guide you through a time that can often feel anxious and uncertain, but which can also be a wonderful opportunity of discerning and experiencing God’s will at work. While I only served as an Interim Pastor for a brief time early in my career, I believe that my thirty-seven years of experience as a pastor in a variety of churches, my fourteen years of experience as an Intern Pastor Supervisor, and my recent training provided by the New England Synod, provides a solid background for serving in this role to which God has called me. You can trust that I will work hard and faithfully to help you move more strongly into the future God has in mind for you. Most of all, I promise to love you all with the love of Christ.

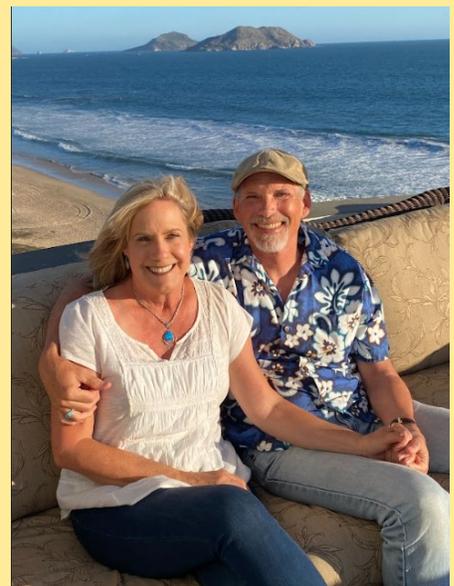
In addition to the congregational and small group events and activities that are part of interim work about which you will hear later, I’m also available and eager to assist with pastoral care and acts such as baptisms and funerals, to lead in worship, and to help with administration, among other pastoral responsibilities. While I’m here at First on a ¾ time basis with ¼ time also committed to Grace Lutheran Church in Auburn, know that when I’m here I’ll be fully present to you and your needs. From what I’ve seen and experienced so far, you have a great team of caring and dedicated leaders who are eager and committed to work together for the good of all. I’m excited to be a part of this chapter in your long and faithful story of God working through First Lutheran to be His healing presence in a hurting world.

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Pastor Mark Perry



Family reunion in Sedona, AZ with my parents, daughters, twin granddaughters, and one son-in-law



Linda and I
in Mazatlan
on our 40th
Anniversary

Youth & Worship Ministry

May has been a busy month for us here at First Lutheran! The youth started the month strong by attending a food packaging event with the Ecumenical Service Corps at Trinity Episcopal in Portland. We had over a dozen volunteers — a mix of youth and adults — show up.

Combined with the volunteers from Trinity and St. Alban's in Cape Elizabeth, we packaged over 10,000 meals for hungry families in Maine! And at least a third of the boxes are going to be distributed right here in the Portland area. Everyone had a great time, and don't be surprised if we at First Lutheran hosts one of these food packaging events in the fall!

On Mother's Day, I worked with Delvyn Case (recently returned from FL) to adapt his short play about Anna Jarvis, the founder of Mother's Day, into a short message for the kids. It was a lot of fun to do, and the kids really enjoyed it! I have a feeling that with Delvyn back, there will be more short plays and sketches over the summer.

The last Sunday in May was both Pentecost and Confirmation Sunday, a day when six of our young people here at First Lutheran stood before the church to affirm the commitment their parents made at their baptisms. Aaron and I have been privileged to work with the confirmands this year. We've been truly impressed by their thoughtfulness and insights in our class discussions, and we were so excited to stand with them as they become adult members of First Lutheran! This is a huge moment in their faith journeys, and we were happy to celebrate this momentous occasion during a special coffee hour following the service.

After breaking for a few weeks due to Easter and April vacation, in May the Sunday School program got back in our groove of regular classes at 9AM Sunday mornings. This month, the kids have been learning about the virtue of confidence — living like you believe God is with you — and have had a lot of fun with their teachers in the process! We're on track to finish this month strong, and can't believe that June, and the end of our Sunday School year, is almost upon us. The last day of Sunday School will be June 11th, and our Sunday School awards will be given during worship on June 25th. Please mark your calendar and join us as we celebrate the kids of First Lutheran and all they have learned this year!

As always, it is a pleasure to serve you all as Minister of Youth and Worship.

God's Peace,

Jenna

jenna.hoffman@flcme.org

Church Calendar

Your FLC Staff asks that anyone planning to hold an event or activity at the church facility, including the Fellowship Hall and the parking lots, please inform Joleen Knowles in the Church Office of your intent as far in advance as feasible so that it can be scheduled into the church office calendar as well as on the website. This will help ensure that all who use and work at the church are aware of any special events.

We appreciate your support as we seek to ensure that all the wonderful ministries that happen here take place more smoothly and that potential scheduling conflicts are minimized. Thank you!



Why a Butterfly in our logo?

Butterflies are only one of God’s creations that show spectacular changes throughout its life cycle. Butterflies grow from an egg to a caterpillar finally emerging from the pupa or chrysalis as a beautiful butterfly. The symbol of the butterfly in the poster represents the wonderful and exciting changes the preschooler experiences as a result of early childhood education in our First Lutheran Early Childhood program—starting as a Toddler and moving to the Preschool class and blossoming as a result! The metamorphosis continues!

How to Support Our Give a Child a Chance Ministry?

- Order RaiseRight Shopping/Gift cards from over 750 retailers to give to those folks who are so hard to buy for — the teens, the young families, the seniors in your lives. Each card provides a rebate to our Give a Child a Chance tuition preschool support fund. RaiseRight gift cards are sold the first two Sundays of the month. You can find us at our table in the Fellowship Hall.
- Donate to Give a Child a Chance in honor of that special someone who “doesn’t need another thing,” but who you want to recognize with a gift. We have cards for you to use to let the person know of the gift given in his or her name.
- Donate to Give a Child a Chance in memory of a loved one,
- Make a one-time monetary donation or become a sustaining donating member to Give a Child a Chance. Easily done by going to the FLC website and clicking on the DONATE link.
- Thrivent members can designate your Thrivent Dollars to go to our Give a Child a Chance tuition support fund twice a year. Since you know the amount of Thrivent Dollars you have in your account, just let Treasurer Ed Daggett know you wish to have that specific amount go to Give a Child a Chance. You can reach Ed at ed.daggett@flcme.org

All the money raised for Give a Child a Chance goes directly to support neighborhood children to attend our nationally accredited preschool — children who wouldn’t be able to get that push to readiness for kindergarten without this help.

Thanks so much for your prayers and continued support. We are so grateful.

Team members: Ann Brown, Susan Bollman, Wendy Carey, Karen Johnson, and Colleen Taylor

[**Ec-fund@flcme.org**](mailto:Ec-fund@flcme.org)

The members of the Holiday Fair Committee are retiring. We are so very blessed and grateful for the support and fellowship of our church community over these last several years of Fair planning. The time has come to pass the baton on to others who can breathe new life and new ideas into this important fundraiser for our church and community. We will be glad to act as “consultants” if a new team of volunteers wishes to organize future craft fairs. Thank you all and God’s Peace!

Fair Committee Members: Susan Bollman, Deb Heald, Laura Page and Colleen Taylor

Getting to Know Us

Laura Page



In the fall of 1996 Laura, her husband Jim and their 2 children, Mellissa and Eric, moved from Connecticut to Windham, Maine. In January of the following year they began their search for a Lutheran Church. When visiting Lutheran churches in the area they were drawn to FLC based on the sermon, children's programs, and the warm welcome from fellowship members. Laura has now been a member of the congregation for 26 years.

Laura's work career began right out of high school with the Aetna Insurance Company. While working there for 23 years, she was able to complete a degree in Business Management and retired at age 50. Laura then made a major and rewarding career shift to the field of Special Education where she worked for the Windham School Department until her second retirement 18 years later.

One thing Laura likes to do for fun is to read or watch the genres of thrillers, suspense and dramas. Her favorite movies are "To Kill a Mockingbird" and the "Hunger Games". Laura's current favorite book is *Where the Crawdads Sing*, which she says she has read many times.

When asked what makes her laugh the most, Laura said that it is her husband with visiting her son or her daughter and son-in-law who now live in Indiana coming in a close second. "It has been a lot of belly laughs and tears of joy."

Thank you, Laura, for volunteering to be the first for our inaugural Getting to Know Us section of the FLC newsletter! If you would like to volunteer to be featured please email Lauren at cormil61@gmail.com. We are looking forward to getting to know more about all of us!

Congratulations!



Sarah Dressel graduates in June from Yarmouth High School. She will be attending College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA this September. Sarah is the daughter of Doug and Ina Dressel, and sister to Christina and Matthew.

If someone in your family is graduating from high school or college, please let us know and we will recognize their accomplishment in the Summer newsletter. Send the information to news@flcme.org.



Danielle, Stella, Cooper, Sawyer, Nils, Garrett (left to right)

Stella Hayn, Sawyer Hayn, Cooper Hayn, Nils Leland, Danielle Santiago and Garrett Thees made public affirmation of their baptisms in the Rite of Confirmation on Pentecost Sunday.

These six youth completed a confirmation process that was impacted by the COVID shutdown and a change in pastors.

We rejoice with Stella, Sawyer, Cooper, Nils, Danielle and Garrett at this milestone event, and we ask God to bless and watch over these young people as they continue to grow in their spiritual lives and as they show Christ's love in service to others.



The Confirmands with Jenna & Aaron Hoffman and Pastor Mark



The Children's Program held their annual Art Show in May. Below is just a sample of some of the exhibits. It is obvious that there are some very talented kids in the program!



From the Editor

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life...

The Nicene Creed, Article III

*Neither you nor I could ever know anything about Christ,
or believe on Him, and have Him for our Lord,
unless it were offered to us and granted to our hearts
by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Gospel.*

Martin Luther, *Large Catechism, Part II, Article III*

The end of May and the beginning of June bring us two Festival Sundays, the Feast of Pentecost and the Holy Trinity, before we begin the long season of Ordinary Time (the Sundays after Pentecost) which will take us into late autumn. The Holy Spirit, which we celebrated on Pentecost Sunday, lies at the heart of Martin Luther's teachings. You can see this in both his small and large catechisms, as well as in his sermons, writings and hymns.

In his Large Catechism, Luther writes about the third article of the Apostles' Creed, "I cannot connect this article to anything better than Sanctification. Through this article the Holy Spirit, with His office, is declared and shown: He makes people holy." Luther continues, "the Holy Spirit causes our sanctification by the following: the communion of saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. That means He leads us first into His holy congregation and places us in the bosom of the Church. Through the Church He preaches to us and brings us to Christ."

It is the Holy Spirit that calls us together as the Church, where the Gospel is preached and the sacraments are given. Without the Holy Spirit, there would be no church. It is through the Holy Spirit that we have faith and that we believe in the saving work of Christ. Luther wrote, "For we could never grasp the knowledge of the Father's grace and favor except through the Lord Christ. But we couldn't know anything about Christ either, unless it had been revealed by the Holy Spirit."

When we talk about the Feast of Pentecost, we talk about the Holy Spirit coming upon the disciples and others 50 days after Easter, and after Christ ascended to heaven. But it is important to remember that the work of the Holy Spirit was not a one-time event. The work continues on through generations, continues on to this day, and will continue on until Christ comes again. Even when we do not recognize it, the Holy Spirit is working daily in our lives. As Luther writes, again in the Large Catechism,

Now this is the article of the Creed that must always be and remain in use. For we have already received creation. Redemption, too, is finished. But the Holy Spirit carries on His work without ceasing to the Last Day. For that purpose He has appointed a congregation upon earth by which He speaks and does everything. For He has not yet brought together all His Christian Church or granted all forgiveness. Therefore, we believe in Him who daily brings us into the fellowship of this Christian Church through the Word. Through the same Word and the forgiveness of sins He bestows, increases, and strengthens faith. So when He has done it all, and we abide in this and die to the world and to all evil, He may finally make us perfectly and forever holy. Even now we expect this in faith through the Word.

Luther knew, and we as Lutherans believe, that we are saved simply through faith in Christ Jesus. And that faith is given to us freely by the grace of God. There is nothing we can do—no good works, no adherence to the law—that can earn us eternal salvation. It is only through the saving work of Christ on the cross that our sins are forgiven and we are called the children of God. Our faith does not exist apart from the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Word. We cannot know Christ and we cannot partake in God's saving power without the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not just come to us once at our baptism, but He comes to us daily and will continue to do so.

May you, as Martin Luther did, recognize and remember the importance of the Holy Spirit—one with the Father and the Son—not only on Pentecost Sunday but every day.

In +His service,

Bill Mills

Many thanks to everyone who helped out at the Parsonage on May 13 to get it ready for Pastor Mark and Linda to move in. Walls were washed, windows shined, bathrooms and the kitchen cleaned, flower gardens spruced up, and trash hauled away.

Special thanks to the Property Team who completed dozens of projects, especially the renovation of the upstairs bathroom and the refinishing of the hardwood floors. Everything looked great, and the house and property were ready for the Perrys to move in to their “temporary” new home.



June Days to Remember



Sunday, June 4

Trinity Sunday



Father's Day
June 18



First Day of Summer
June 21



June 14

Flag Day

June 19



Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God.

2 Corinthians 1: 3-4



Abbott Knowles
Ned Long
Wendy Carey
Grace Conant Stockwell
Judy Horn
Charlotte Krantz
Bob Mitchell
Dave Deuben
Sue Hayden
Lynne Fishburn
Jeffrey Durloo
FLC Call Committee
FLC Sunday School
FLC Church Council
Bev Beliveau

Jen & Brian Hazelwood
Paul & Sharon Aube
Faith Lutheran Church
Victims of racism and hate, especially those in the LGBTQIA+ community
All victims of violence
Our brothers and sisters at St. Ansgar Lutheran



June 1	Trena Durloo
June 11	Jake Brown
June 19	Nancy Houlihan
June 20	Sally Heath
June 26	Lorna Leo

After deep discernment, consideration, conversation and prayer, the members of St. Ansgar Lutheran Church decided to take the faithful step to close the congregation.

There will be a Celebration Worship service on Sunday, June 4th at 1:00pm. All members of the area Lutheran churches are invited to attend this special service. The church is located at 515 Woodford Street in Portland.

St. Ansgar will hold a Service of Leaving on Sunday, June 11th at 10:00am.

Please keep our brothers and sisters in your prayers and thoughts as they go through this emotional process.



e-mail prayer chain

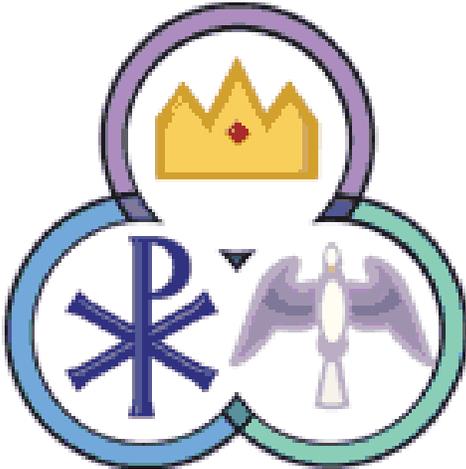
Prayer is such an important part of our daily Christian lives, and sometimes extra prayers are needed. If you have any special prayer requests and you would like to have our "Prayer Warriors" praying as well, please send an email.

prayer-request@flcme.org



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH
132 AUBURN STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE 04103-2145**

June 2023



THREE IN ONE

First News is a monthly publication of First Lutheran Church. Articles can be submitted to the church office, or by email to news@flcme.org. The deadline is the 15th.

**Worship Service is at 10:00 am
Sunday School is at 9:00 am**

Church Office Hours are Monday thru Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm (797-2525)

www.FLCME.org

STAFF

Transitional Interim Pastor Rev. Mark Perry (mark.perry@flcme.org)
Youth and Worship Minister Jenna Hoffman (jenna.hoffman@flcme.org)
Church Secretary.....Joleen Knowles (joleen.knowles@flcme.org)
Church Organist..... Brenda Morneau (brenda.morneau@flcme.org)
Director—FLC Children’s Community Ministry Sherryl Eastman (flcpinfo@flcme.org)

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Vice-President..... Coleen Walther
Secretary Judy Horn
Treasurer Ed Daggett
Financial Secretary Cheryl Cyr